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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

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# WEEKLY SUMMARY

## *Special Report*

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*China's Leadership in the Wake of the Cultural Revolution*

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## CHINA'S LEADERSHIP IN THE WAKE OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which erupted in the spring of 1966, has had a profound impact on the shape and effectiveness of the leadership in Peking. The image of unanimity that the Chinese Communist leadership projected for its first 16 years of rule was rent during the Cultural Revolution, revealing a divided elite wracked by personal rivalries and conflicts over power and policy. During the past three years, the leadership has gone through a violent convulsion, and the fissures opened and widened by the Cultural Revolution make it unlikely that the regime will be able to build a fully cohesive top command for some time to come. In the course of the struggle, many shifts have taken place at the pinnacle of power, and the new ruling politburo produced by the ninth party congress in April 1969 is an uneasy amalgam of competing interest groups, each striving for power—or survival—at the expense of the others. Although the politburo may present a facade of unity as long as the venerable Mao Tse-tung presides over it, its current divisions will be an element of potential instability for the short term and especially during the post-Mao transition period.

### CHANGING THE GUARD IN PEKING

The Cultural Revolution has profoundly altered the shape and perhaps the function of Communist China's ruling body, the politburo of the Communist Party. The new body is a peculiar creation compared with the previous one. Prior to the Cultural Revolution, the politburo consisted of party chairman Mao Tse-tung and a number of top regime officials, each of whom had a special constituency that he monitored on behalf of the party. Thus, one man's primary duty was agriculture; one concerned himself with economic planning; one with foreign affairs; another with party business; yet another with military matters, and so forth. The new politburo does not appear to be constructed along such lines. There is no sharp breakdown of responsibilities. No one, for example, is clearly assigned to oversee the vital agriculture sector of the economy. Instead, the current politburo seems to be a fragile balance of rival groupings that have emerged out of the leadership struggle of the past three years.

The various terms employed to describe the leadership groupings—"radicals" versus "conservatives," "extremists" versus "moderates," "ideologues" versus "pragmatists"—are inadequate to describe the complexities of the situation. Nevertheless, they do serve to highlight the fact that most, if not all, of the present politburo members possess political identities that place them to one side or the other in the political spectrum of the elite. Thus, those who have clearly identified themselves with the excesses of the Cultural Revolution will be referred to in this paper as "radicals," and those who appear to have been either active in restraining the excesses or who have been the victims of personal denunciation by "radical" elements will be labeled "moderates" or "conservatives."

The radical "Maoist" group holds the pre-eminent positions in the new politburo. It comprises the chairman himself and his heir-designate Lin Biao; their wives; Mao's speech writer Ch'en Po-ta; his hatchet man and security specialist

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## ★ ★ POLITBURO OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY, APRIL 1969 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MEMBERS	AGE	TOP POSTS
<b>STANDING COMMITTEE</b>		
MAO TSE-TUNG*	76	Chairman, Central Committee of the CCP.
LIN PIAO*	62	Vice Chairman, Central Committee of the CCP; Acting Chairman, Military Affairs Committee; Minister of National Defense.
CHOU EN-LAI*	72	Premier, State Council.
CH'EN PO-TA*	65	Head, Cultural Revolution Group.
K'ANG SHENG*	68	Adviser, Cultural Revolution Group.
<b>OTHER FULL MEMBERS</b>		
YEH CH'UN	44	Member, PLA Cultural Revolution Group.
YEH CHIEN-YING*	72	Standing Committee, Military Affairs Committee.
LIU PO-CH'ENG*	78	Standing Committee, Military Affairs Committee.
CHIANG CH'ING	c.54	First Deputy Head, Cultural Revolution Group.
CHU TE*	84	Chairman, National People's Congress.
HSU SHIH-YU	c.63	Commander, Nanking Military Region; Chairman, Kiangsu Provincial Revolutionary Committee.
CH'EN HSI-LIEN	58	Commander, Mukden (Shen-yang) Military Region; Chairman, Liaoning Provincial Revolutionary Committee.
LI HSIEN-NIEN*	c.68	Minister of Finance; State Council.
LI TSO-P'ENG	c.60	Standing Committee, Military Affairs Committee; First Political Commissar, Chinese Navy.
WU FA-HSIEN	58	Standing Committee, Military Affairs Committee; Air Force Commander.
CHANG CH'UN-CH'IAO	c.51	Second Deputy Head, Cultural Revolution Group; Chairman, Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee.
CH'IU HUI-TSO	c.55	Standing Committee, Military Affairs Committee; Director, PLA General Rear Services Department.
YAO WEN-YUAN	c.31	Member, Cultural Revolution Group; Vice Chairman, Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee.
HUANG YUNG-SHENG	62	Standing Committee, Military Affairs Committee; Chief of Staff, PLA General Staff.
TUNG PI-WU*	84	Secretary, Control Commission
HSIEH FU-CHIH*	68	Chairman, Peking Municipal Revolutionary Committee; Minister of Public Security; State Council.
<b>ALTERNATE MEMBERS</b>		
CHI TENG-K'UEI	na	Vice Chairman, Honan Provincial Revolutionary Committee.
LI HSUEH-FENG*	64	Chairman, Hopeh Provincial Revolutionary Committee.
LI TE-SHENG	c.57	Commander, 12th Army; Chairman, Anhwei Provincial Revolutionary Committee.
WANG TUNG-HSING	na	Member, Cultural Revolution Group; Vice Minister, Public Security.

NOTE: Full and alternate members are listed in the Chinese equivalent of alphabetical order.

na Data not available

\* Member of former Politburo.

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K'ang Sheng; a long-time leftist propaganda specialist, Yao Wen-yuan; and Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, the political boss of Shanghai. In addition, Mao's bodyguard, Wang Tung-hsing, is one of the four alternate members of the politburo. All of these leaders—with the exception of Mao, Lin, and Madame Lin—belonged to the so-called central "Cultural Revolution Group," an inner elite fostered by Mao and charged with purging the Chinese Communist Party and pushing his "revolutionary" ideas. Since late 1965 these people have risen rapidly on the crest of political turmoil, and they owe their present positions entirely to the fact that they proved their personal loyalty to Mao even before the Cultural Revolution began. They constitute little more than the old man's personal entourage. Of this group only Lin Piao, who is minister of defense, and K'ang Sheng, who is in charge of the political security apparatus, appear to perform what might be considered normal politburo functions. The rest—in particular Madame Mao—are very active in the field of cultural affairs which was, of course, of major political significance in the Cultural Revolution. At present, however, there is little evidence as to what specific tasks of leadership they may perform other than trying to firm up their control over a restructured Communist Party.

Mao's group also dominates the standing committee of the politburo, normally the highest policy-making body in China. It is now composed of Mao and Lin, Chou En-lai, Ch'en Po-ta, and K'ang Sheng. The only one of this group not closely identified with the radical excesses of the Cultural Revolution is Chou. Mao, however, appears to trust Chou's personal loyalty completely. Because the full politburo does not appear to function normally, it is also possible that the standing committee may not be playing its customary role. Some of the programs pursued since the ninth party congress are those pushed by Chou En-lai and the more moderate members of

the politburo, and others bear the imprint of the radicals, suggesting that the standing committee is having great difficulty in settling on one set of coherent policies, let alone in getting them carried out.

The new politburo is also remarkable for its unusually large military representation. Along with Defense Minister Lin Piao, the politburo now contains the chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army, the political commissar of the Navy, the Air Force chief, the director of the General Rear Services Department, and two regional military commanders. In addition, the commander of a field army is an alternate member. It is doubtful that these men constitute a unified political faction. On the contrary, because the military has tended to split along the same radical-conservative lines that have ruptured party and government, the military figures on the politburo probably reflect divergent views and different constituencies. Nevertheless, several of these military leaders shared one common experience—heavy attacks from the Red Guards—which may have caused them to favor more moderate lines.

Another, smaller group on the politburo consists of Chou En-lai, Li Hsien-nien, and Hsieh Fu-chih, the only remnants of what used to be a substantial representation of the government bureaucracy. Chou and Li, and perhaps Hsieh, may share a considerable coincidence of views with the moderate members of the military group. This element may also pick up at least two more supporters from the group of four old-timers who are still on the politburo. Chu Te and Tung Pi-wu are octogenarians, and Liu Po-ch'eng is almost eighty and enfeebled. The fourth member of this group is Marshal Yeh Chien-ying, who still serves on the powerful Military Affairs Committee. Chu Te and Yeh—both of whom were heavily attacked in the Cultural Revolution—may

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MAO TSE-TUNG AND HIS ENTOURAGE



Ch'en Po-ta



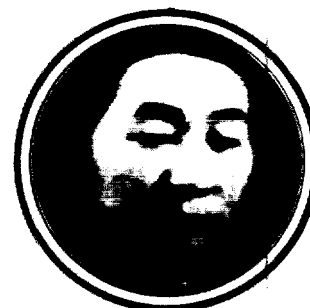
Lin Piao



K'ang Sheng



Chiang Ch'ing



Yeh Ch'un



Yao Wen-yuan



Wang Tung-hsing



Chang Ch'un-ch'iao

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well side with the moderates. Liu is a cipher because of his age and general debility, and Tung may well follow whatever Mao dictates.

There are also four alternate members of the politburo. Le Te-sheng has already been mentioned as one of the military representatives and Wang Tung-hsing as one of Mao's entourage. Chi Teng-k'uei is the vice chairman of the Honan Province Revolutionary Committee. In addition to the fact that Chi is said to be a "personal friend" of Mao, he seems to be on the politburo as a symbol of those provincial political leaders who were actively aligned with the radicals during the Cultural Revolution. Li Hsueh-feng, on the other hand, lost his post as head of the North China Party Bureau in late 1966 and was subsequently reinstated in the lesser post of chairman of the Hopeh Province Revolutionary Committee. He may be on the politburo as a symbol of the former party officials who have been rehabilitated by the "thought of Mao Tse-tung."

#### THE HELMSMAN AT SEA

If it is correct to view the new politburo as an uneasy body of competing special-interest groups, questions are raised about the attitudes of the members, the interests each represents and the degree to which the politburo as a whole reflects Mao's personal power. Two of Mao's purposes in launching the Cultural Revolution were to remove certain party leaders he believed had put him on the shelf after the failure of the Great Leap Forward in 1958-1959 and to regain personal mastery of the command and control apparatus of the party.

No doubt Mao intended to replace Liu, Teng, and the others who fell during

the Cultural Revolution with people completely loyal to him and responsive to his directions. The politburo that emerged from the ninth party congress, however, does not appear to fit that mold. The disparate elements that constitute the politburo and the apparent difficulty the leadership is having in developing and implementing new national policies suggest that Mao still has not regathered all the reins of power into his own hands.

Any assessment of Mao's political strength, however, is hampered by the lack of good information on the manner in which he follows through in shaping and implementing policies that are outlined in the brief, Delphic "instructions" that he periodically issues. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao's "instructions" were often used by opposing political forces to their own advantage. Such developments add to the difficulty of determining when and on what side Mao commits himself on issues under debate by the leadership. The evidence that is available suggests that despite his advocacy of extreme policies, Mao has probably managed better than his more radical lieutenants to keep his lines open to those figures in the army and in the government establishment who have often attempted to limit the scope of many of his pet projects.

Because of his advanced age, frequent lengthy absences from public view, and the leadership's practice of issuing quite contradictory guidelines in Mao's name, it has often appeared that his instructions have been manipulated by rival forces in the elite. Thus, radical elements have probably pushed some of the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and carried on personal vendettas on grounds that they were acting in accordance with Mao's will, while conservative forces have employed the same rationale to counter policies and personalities to which they were opposed. This suggests that Mao has not been able

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to control all major events in the Cultural Revolution and that there has been both considerable distortion and nonobedience of his instructions as they have filtered from his inner circle, through the top leadership ranks, and down to the local levels.

Mao, nevertheless, is not merely a figurehead manipulated by some eminence grise behind the throne. He appears to remain a consummate politician who, if unable to have his way on all matters, is still able to retain considerable leverage by playing off opposing groups within the elite against one another. He may, for example, recognize more readily than some of his radical colleagues—who apparently have been supporting troublesome factionalists in many localities—that Peking needs to restore national discipline and establish a greater degree of control over the provincial situation before many major policy initiatives can be undertaken. Hence, he has responded affirmatively to the urging of order-oriented local military men who have asked Peking for a freer hand to suppress dissidents in recent months. At the same time, Mao may well have doubts about the responsiveness of many regional and local commanders to his revolutionary goals; thus, he may be behind the radical-sounding press attacks in recent months on the army's poor performance of its political duties.

Whatever the extent of Mao's influence on given issues, he remains a charismatic figure of enormous prestige and, in many respects, the unifying element maintaining the present fragile balance at the center. Any open and direct challenge to his pre-eminence seems highly unlikely at this stage. The men who have been willing—or forced—to submerge their major differences to work under Mao, however, may be unwilling to accept the leadership of a less revered individual. The fact that, in a basic sense, no one can really replace Mao raises great uncertainties about

China's future, and these uncertainties persist even though Mao took the step at the eleventh party plenum in August 1966 of designating Vice Chairman Lin Piao as his successor.

### LIN PIAO

Totalitarian regimes such as China's historically have had difficulty arranging for the orderly transfer of power, and the assiduous grooming of Lin as Mao's immediate successor has been a conscious attempt to solve this problem. Throughout the Cultural Revolution he has constantly been portrayed not only as Mao's "closest comrade in arms" but also as the foremost interpreter and exponent of "Mao Tse-tung Thought" in China.

Lin has risen in spite of a long record of illness—he is known to have had tuberculosis. He was elected to the politburo in 1955 and to its standing committee in 1958. The following year he was appointed minister of national defense, replacing the disgraced P'eng Te-huai. He was also put in active charge of the party's Military Affairs Committee, the supreme military authority.

Even though Lin is a civil war hero and has stood at the center of party and military power for over a decade, less is known about him than about any other major Chinese leader. There is a large body of articles and speeches attributed to him, but it shows only that he applauds and echoes Maoist doctrine at every point. Lin's contacts with foreigners have also been limited. He has never been abroad except for medical treatment in the Soviet Union, and his attitude toward the outside world is probably suspicious and hostile.

Apparently the major turning point in Lin's career came in 1959, when he was charged by Mao with improving morale and tightening up lax

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WALKING IN MAO'S SHADOW

political practices in the army. It is clear, in retrospect, that Mao hoped to exploit a politically rejuvenated army under Lin as a major instrument in combating the views of both professional military leaders and party apparatus chiefs who he believed were opposing his various campaigns to step up "revolutionary fervor" in Chinese society.

On the surface it would appear that the broader national role of the army in the early 1960s, and its subsequent emergence as the primary instrument of political and administrative control in the country, have enhanced both Lin's power and authority vis-a-vis the other members of the elite and his ability to consolidate his position after Mao goes. Nevertheless, there are other indications that Lin's role since 1959, and particularly in the Cultural Revolution, has cost him much support in important military and civilian circles. His efforts to put "politics in command" in the army, for example, seriously exacerbated strains between officers oriented toward political action and those more concerned with long-standing professional military problems. Furthermore, Lin's support of Mao's purge of numerous senior officers in December 1966 and January 1967 aroused dismay among large numbers of the military leadership. Again, during some of the most destructive phases of the radical Red Guard movement, it was Lin who backed Mao's orders to the army to intervene on the side of the "true revolutionaries." This move probably did not sit well with some elements in the army.

There is little evidence that Lin is as astute politically as Mao Tse-tung, and there have been recurrent rumors that important, but unnamed, members of the regime consider Lin unfit to assume Mao's mantle. Although there is no evidence that other politburo members have directly criticized Lin, a recent spate of press articles praising Lin's record as a military leader suggests that his stature needs periodic shoring up. It

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appears in fact that his own prestige and strength derive from Mao's confidence in him rather than from a power base in the military establishment.

### CHOU EN-LAI

The probable future course of China's number-three man is easier to chart than that of Mao's second in command. Chou En-lai is as close to being the indispensable man as any official in China today, and his death would have a profound impact on the stability of the leadership. Chou's record over the years suggests that he has discovered that he can exert much more influence on the course of events by being number-three than by entering the lists as a possible successor to Mao. He has, thus far, managed to retain Mao's confidence and at the same time project an image of reasonableness, moderation, and responsibility. He serves an important function as a loyal executor of Mao's policies and as a "window on reality" for the ideologically oriented party chairman.

As premier, Chou's chief concern is the government bureaucracy and foreign affairs, although his interest and capacities apparently involve him in all major policy issues confronting the regime. During the Cultural Revolution, moreover, additional responsibilities devolved on him almost by default because he is apparently the only member of the top three with sufficient vigor to engage in the day-to-day direction of central government affairs. Chou is a suave, urbane politician who has reached his key position after decades of savage struggle and subtle compromise. He has demonstrated an uncanny knack for emerging on the right side of issues, and his toughness, caution, and willingness to use the knife when necessary have served him well in the vicious infighting that has been part of the Cultural Revolution from the outset.

Chou's ability to retain his powerful position even though out of step with some aspects of the Cultural Revolution is a reflection both of his unrivaled political skill and his indispensability. Nevertheless, through his efforts to curb radical excesses, Chou may have incurred the wrath of some of the radical "Maoists," and they made several attempts during the Cultural Revolution to undercut his position. Sometimes they attacked him directly, but their major onslaughts were more often made against his vice premiers and other government ministry officials in an effort to weaken his personal power base.

Red Guard posters have alleged that some of the attacks on government officials in early 1967 were the work of "ultraleftist extremists" called the "May 16 Corps." Reportedly supported by members of the powerful Cultural Revolution Group headed by Ch'en Po-ta, K'ang Sheng, and Madame Mao, the May 16 Corps was accused of pressing a long-range plan to strike at Chou's subordinates and allies and ultimately to bring down Chou himself. Even allowing for a high degree of exaggeration in these charges, it is not surprising that the Cultural Revolution Group



UNEASY RIDERS...

Ch'en Po-ta, K'ang Sheng, Madame Mao, and Chou En-lai

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would try to weaken Chou, and the subsequent purge of some of its second-echelon members in late 1967 reflected unfavorably on Ch'en Po-ta and particularly on K'ang Sheng, whether or not they in fact were behind-the-scenes backers of the "May 16 Corps." Chou himself was able to survive the radicals' onslaughts perhaps because Mao was persuaded that he was needed to hold the country together. Nonetheless, Chou's personal base of power did suffer serious attrition, and, despite his public defense of some of his key associates, several failed to survive or were reduced to lesser positions after the ninth congress.

Despite the setbacks to his entourage, Chou still seems to retain considerable room for maneuver within the regime. Several of his protégés are still around and probably continue to work on economic planning, for example, even though removed from the politburo. More important, because Chou has not been identified with the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution, he is probably the only high-ranking official still in a position to talk with all groups engaged in the current struggle over power and policy. Finally, at a time when Peking is under considerable pressure from Moscow, Chou's unrivaled experience in foreign affairs once again reinforces the notion of his indispensability. The fact that Chou is apparently content to exercise huge power without trying to assume Mao's mantle, plus his ability to be all things to all men, makes it appear that he still has the best prospect of any Chinese leader to survive in a position of authority.

#### CH'EN PO-TA AND K'ANG SHENG

The remaining members of the standing committee have been prominent in the radical grouping in the central leadership ever since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Ch'en, reportedly Mao's ghost writer for decades, headed up the Cultural Revolution Group, which had

primary responsibility for the Red Guards and reportedly continues to play a role in party building. Since the demise of the Red Guards as a political force, Ch'en has lost an important power base, and his support from the grassroots mass organizations has probably been weakened. In any case, he appears to owe his position entirely to his close personal relationship with Mao.

K'ang Sheng was long the head of the secret police and intelligence services, and he has apparently resumed that role in recent years. An important party figure long before the Communist take-over in 1949, K'ang was demoted in the mid-1940s at the time Liu Shao-ch'i emerged as Mao's second in command. K'ang has risen rapidly, however, since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution and served as adviser to the Cultural Revolution Group. Red Guard accounts have suggested that K'ang currently has direct responsibilities in party rebuilding as well as the principal responsibility for political security work.

Presumably both men are close to Madame Mao (Chiang Ch'ing) and other Cultural Revolution Group members on the politburo, but their militance in supporting Mao's program for "revolution" has probably alienated the more moderate and pragmatic forces in the leadership. Although both Ch'en and K'ang have hastened to identify themselves with moderate policy lines when necessary, both have attempted to feather their political nests where possible by eliminating actual and potential rivals.

In any case, Ch'en and K'ang have almost certainly made so many enemies over the course of the revolution that unless they succeed in eliminating their opponents or in coming to terms with them, both will probably be hard pressed to retain much political influence in a post-Mao regime.

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## THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION GROUP LEADERS

Many of the strengths and weaknesses that characterize the positions of Ch'en and K'ang also apply to the remaining Cultural Revolution Group figures on the politburo: Chiang Ch'ing, Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, Yao Wen-yuan, Yeh Ch'un (Madame Lin Piao), and Wang Tung-hsing. Before the Cultural Revolution these people were political nonentities or lower echelon leaders, none of whom had a firm independent base of support. Some, and perhaps all, of them are fanatical, doctrinaire ideologues who actually share Mao's belief that it is essential to maintain a high state of tension and ideological fervor in China in order to sustain revolutionary momentum and ensure rapid change.

The Cultural Revolution Group leaders are ambitious underlings who believe that their best opportunity to consolidate their positions is to continue to push the radical sociopolitical programs that Mao wants and to try to weaken their opponents within the central leadership. Therefore, they probably consider voices for moderation a real danger to themselves. During the course of the Cultural Revolution the position of the Cultural Revolution Group leaders was progressively weakened by the fall of several of their middle-echelon adherents, and the moderating trend evident in recent months probably has further circumscribed their room for maneuver. At present, their power base is rudimentary; they have only tenuous organizational support in the provinces, and little following among the people. Once Mao goes, their power is likely to diminish considerably unless they can develop new sources of political strength. They may currently be attempting to undermine the power base of some regional and provincial military chieftains. But even if they make some progress along these lines, they have made so many enemies that their future

political prospects are dim under any but the most militant of regimes.

The most fanatical and potentially the most politically insecure of these individuals is Chiang Ch'ing, Mao's fourth wife. She first became an important political figure only in late 1965, when Mao used her to plant an article in the Shanghai press attacking a playwright who was to serve as a symbol of all opposition to Mao's thought and will. The madame, a one-time bit player in Shanghai movies, had been occupied for more than 15 years with an effort to reduce all of the Chinese arts to propaganda. Until 1965, party leaders seem to have regarded her as a simple-minded nuisance not to be taken seriously.

In the early stages of the Cultural Revolution, however, she emerged as a formidable opponent. As a leader of the central Cultural Revolution Group as well as "adviser" to that body for the conduct of "revolution" in the People's Liberation Army, she became the most vocal spokesman for the militants. In all her roles, she has demonstrated an enormous talent for mischief-making, and through her incitement of Red Guard disruptions and her attacks on large numbers of government and military leaders she probably earned the undying enmity of those in the moderate camp in both Peking and the provinces. In recent weeks her contributions to "revolutionary literature and art" have been heavily praised in the official press in such a manner as to suggest that her voice may still be influential in regime councils. Because many of these articles have been thinly veiled criticisms of the state of army-civilian relations, there seems little reason to believe that Chiang Ch'ing has ceased castigating her military and government opponents within the leadership.

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### CHANG CH'UN-CH'IAO AND YAO WEN-YUAN

Among Madame Mao's closest allies have been Chang Ch'un-ch'iao and Yao Wen-yuan. The latter, according to Soviet claims, is her son-in-law. Chang and Yao, almost complete unknowns before the Cultural Revolution and both young men by Chinese leadership standards, had worked with Chiang Ch'ing on cultural matters in Shanghai and assisted her in preparing some of the earliest moves in the leadership purge. Chang and Yao serve as chairman and first vice chairman, respectively, of the Shanghai municipal revolutionary committee and have turned that city into an important power base for radical forces in the central leadership.

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One of Chang's and Yao's reported duties has been their involvement in moves to revive the party in a new Maoist image.

Again, both have consistently pressed the radical viewpoint on the subject of party building. Over the past year, for example, the response of Shanghai's Wen Hui Pao (presumably under Yao's direction) to Peking's stepped-up propaganda on rebuilding the party has strongly supported the claims of former radical Red Guard factionalists to new party membership and has criticized revolutionary committees elsewhere in China for absorbing too many conservative military men and former party and government cadres. In all of this maneuvering, Chang and Yao apparently have been the chief voices for radical groups seeking to find an institutional base of support in the reconstructed party apparatus.

### YEH CH'UN AND WANG TUNG-HSING

Less is known about the importance of the two remaining members of the Cultural Revolution Group—Madame Lin, who is known as Yeh Ch'un, and Wang Tung-hsing. Yeh, like her senior counterpart Chiang Ch'ing, has acquired political importance by representing her husband in a working purge group, the People's Liberation Army/Cultural Revolution Group. She has proved to be a fanatic and has a record of attacking prominent military men. Today Yeh still serves on the key army political policy body known as the "administrative unit" of the Military Affairs Committee, where she presumably serves as a radical watchdog over her more conservatively oriented military colleagues.

Wang Tung-hsing, Mao's old bodyguard, also gained prominence as a member of an important purge group. After the eleventh plenum in August 1966, he was assigned to take charge of the central committee's General Office, and in this office he played an important role in the continuing purge within the party. Today Wang remains one of the more shadowy figures of the elite, apparently owing his position almost exclusively to Mao's patronage. Nevertheless, because of Wang's long background in police and security work, he may be regarded as a dangerous opponent by the conservative elements in the politburo.

All of the members of the Cultural Revolution Group may be in a weak position under any kind of post-Mao regime. Their most formidable opponents presumably continue to be those military men in the center and the provinces whose efforts to maintain order have been repeatedly impaired by radical initiatives. Once Mao goes, the radicals' power will diminish unless they somehow manage to build up new sources of strength in the local government structure and in a newly reconstructed party apparatus.

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## Lin and the Military



Li Tso-p'eng



Lin Piao



Wu Fa-hsien



Ch'iu Hui-tso



Yeh Chien-ying



Huang Yung-sheng



Li Te-sheng



Ch'en Hsi-lien



Hsu Shih-yu

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In some respects, alternate politburo member Chi Teng-k'uei, a vice chairman of the Honan Provincial Revolutionary Committee, seems to represent at the highest level the kind of government official the Cultural Revolution Group leaders are backing in the provinces. Little is known about Chi except that he supported radical forces in his province throughout the Cultural Revolution. Presumably through the efforts of strategically placed supporters such as Chi in Honan and elsewhere, the radicals also hope to influence the make-up of the local party organs in their favor. Eventually, they may hope to use the rebuilt party apparatus as a counterweight to their opponents in the military, but at this stage their chances of long-term success seem slim.

### THE MILITARY LEADERS

Despite the importance of the Cultural Revolution Group and its patrons in the standing committee, the pivotal role in China's power structure today is played by the People's Liberation Army leaders in the politburo, whose ranks include more members than ever before from both the central and regional military establishments. Because the army has become a major power center during the Cultural Revolution, the support of this military grouping will be crucial to any successor to Mao. Although it may be assumed that most of these leaders currently remain loyal to Mao, they do not constitute a homogeneous body and their future loyalties remain one of the great uncertainties of the post-Mao era.

In general terms, the army has exhibited some of the same divisive tendencies that have ruptured the party and government. There has been abundant evidence during the Cultural Revolution, however, that the great majority of the leading officers are basically conservative; i.e., they have attempted to curb excessive disorders

and to modify the impact of radical-inspired social and political programs. By and large this basic conservatism seems to characterize most of the military leaders on the new politburo—including some who owe their rise in large part directly to the Cultural Revolution—with the result that they appear to constitute a formidable opposition on many policy issues to the radical forces in the leadership. This divergence of approach to China's problems is compounded by the fact that many of the military leaders suffered under severe, radical-inspired attacks in the Cultural Revolution, which no doubt generated much bitterness and anxiety on their part.

Six of the nine central and provincial military leaders came under heavy pressure from radical forces. These are Huang Yung-sheng, Ch'iu Hui-tso, Hsu Shih-yu, Ch'en Hsi-lien, Li Te-sheng, and Yeh Chien-ying. Huang Yung-sheng is chief of the army General Staff, which makes him China's second most important military man behind Lin Piao. Huang got into deep political trouble in 1967 when, as commander of the Canton Military Region, he cracked down heavily on Red Guard extremists in his area who were backed by Chiang Ch'ing and the Cultural Revolution Group. Because of his action Huang came under sustained radical attack, but he was publicly defended by Chou En-lai.

Huang may have further incurred the enmity of radical forces after the Wuhan incident in 1967. That incident was precipitated when the Wuhan Military Region commander defied Peking's order to cease suppressing a radical Red Guard faction that was opposing his authority in the region. The commander was promptly dismissed, but his action constituted a major turning point in the Cultural Revolution Group's effort to overcome resistance within the military to their radical measures. Huang Yung-sheng appears to have played a leading role in a group of regional

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military leaders most of whom appeared in Peking in late July, where they seem to have joined Chou En-lai in exerting some braking influence on the radicals' drive to "drag out" their opponents in the military establishment.

Huang was one of several regional commanders who remained in the capital during the following four months—where they probably had the opportunity to speak on behalf of their colleagues in the provinces. Lin Piao, in a tough speech to regional army leaders, emphasized the necessity for the disruptions associated with the Cultural Revolution and stressed repeatedly that local officers must seek instruction and guidance from Peking before taking action regarding Red Guard factions. Very soon after Lin's speech, however, both he and Mao began to retreat from their tough stance.

Huang's role as a spokesman for the regional military establishment in the aftermath of the Wuhan incident appears to have strengthened his position. His new importance was confirmed when he was appointed chairman of the Kwangtung Provincial Revolutionary Committee in early 1968, shortly before his transfer to Peking as Chief of Staff of the army. The circumstances in which Huang was elevated to the top of the military command structure appear to lend additional support to the notion that he is the leading representative of conservative military interests.

The trials and tribulations of Hsu Shih-yu and Ch'en Hsi-lien in the Cultural Revolution closely paralleled those of Huang Yung-sheng, and their experiences suggest that they share Huang's conservative bias and his presumed opposition to the radical forces. Hsu is the Commander of the Nanking Military Region and Ch'en is Commander of the Shenyang Military Region. Both Hsu and Ch'en survived sustained Red Guard criticism to retain their regional commands, and

both were able to enhance their political status by acquiring provincial revolutionary committee chairmanships. Their presence on the politburo as spokesmen for the interests of regional and provincial army leaders attests to Peking's—and Mao's—recognition of the new power relationships emerging out of the Cultural Revolution. Because both men are long-time professional soldiers, it also seems likely that they serve as spokesmen for those who appear to have been arguing in recent months that renewed attention must be paid to improving military readiness after the disruptions of the Cultural Revolution, with some corresponding easing of the low-level local administrative and political burdens the army still has to bear.

The remaining military members on the politburo who may share some similarity of views with Huang, Hsu, and Ch'en are Li Te-sheng and probably, Ch'iu Hui-tso. Relatively little is known about Li except that he is commander of the 12th army and, concurrently, chairman of the Anhwei Provincial Revolutionary Committee. He is a military subordinate to Hsu Shih-yu and, like Hsu, appears to be a representative of the powerful provincial military figures who administer much of China. It should be noted, however, that Li is just one of a number of tactical officers who are now running entire provinces. It remains to be seen why Li was selected over his peers to be elevated to his present status. His sudden rise suggests that he may enjoy some special relationship with other powerful figures in Peking above and beyond Hsu Shih-yu.

Ch'iu Hui-tso is a representative of the central military hierarchy. He is a long-time associate of Lin Piao and was allegedly moved into his General Rear Services Department post by Lin to root out remnants of the "anti-Mao, P'eng Te-huai clique." Ch'iu's record in the Cultural Revolution, however, suggests that he may have

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played an important role in attempting to blunt the radical attack on the military establishment. Ch'iu was severely criticized by radical Red Guards in late 1966 and early 1967. Moreover, after he was exonerated, he was named to the army's Cultural Revolution Group in the wake of the Wuhan incident at a time when the more conservative voices in the army successfully sought an end to the radical activities of that army purge group.

The rest of the military men on the politburo appear to be at the opposite end of the spectrum and seem to owe their positions to their readiness to support the aims of the radical forces in the leadership. Wu Fa-hsien has been commander of the Air Force since August 1965, and before that he served as Air Force political commissar since at least 1959. Wu played a major role in the purges within the military establishment and was head of the People's Liberation Army/Cultural Revolution Group after August 1967.

Air Force units have sided with radical forces in several places during the Cultural Revolution, presumably on Wu's orders. Wu was also one of the top leaders present when Chiang Ch'ing delivered her inflammatory "stagnant pools" speech on 12 November 1967, which had such a strong influence in breaking down the short-lived period of political sanity in the fall of 1967. All others present on that occasion are clearly identified as radicals. It seems probable, therefore, that Wu Fa-hsien's long career as a political commissar and his seeming lack of command experience have predisposed him to support radical political initiatives and that, at the least, he has proved ready to accommodate to programs being pushed by the Cultural Revolution Group leaders in Peking.

Little is known about the political commissar of the Navy, Li Tso-p'eng, but his experi-

ence in the Cultural Revolution suggests that he also belongs to the radically oriented wing of the central military. Li, for example, served as deputy head of the Navy's Cultural Revolution purge group and played a prominent part in purges of the People's Liberation Army in general. Furthermore, as was the case with the Air Force under Wu, in province after province the Navy lined up behind the radical forces in their attacks on senior Army leaders.

By siding with the radicals in attacking senior Army officers, Wu and Li have not only enhanced their own positions but have achieved some increase in the number of provincial government posts held by Air Force and Navy officers. Presumably both leaders will support any future moves by the Cultural Revolution Group to strengthen its position vis-a-vis the Army leaders on the politburo. The fact that Wu and Li only represent the junior branches of China's Army forces, however, suggests that they will not bring decisive strength to bear on the radicals' behalf in any political showdown in the post-Mao period.

#### THE GOVERNMENT LEADERS

The position of the radical forces in the politburo seems to be further circumscribed by the fact that the major representatives of the civilian government apparatus appear to be aligned with the moderate camp. Both Vice Premier Hsieh Fu-chih and Finance Minister Li Hsien-nien have been supporters of Chou En-lai and are on record as attempting to curb Cultural Revolution excesses. Hsieh Fu-chih has been one of the busiest officials in the regime in most periods of the Cultural Revolution. When it began, Hsieh was vice premier and minister of public security. Since 1967 he has been chairman of the Peking Municipal Revolutionary Committee, and he now also serves on the "administrative unit" of the Military Affairs Committee. The very fact

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## CHOU EN-LAI AND THE GOVERNMENT LEADERS



Li Hsien-nien



Hsieh Fu-chih

that he has been so busy in so many sectors of authority makes Hsieh somewhat difficult to pigeonhole in terms of political affinities. His ability to pass relatively unscathed through periods of radical ascendancy in 1967 and again in 1968 suggests that at crucial junctures he was willing to make accommodations to the Cultural Revolution Group members of the elite.

Nevertheless, it appears that Hsieh belongs basically to the loose coalition of moderate bureaucrats and army officers. He has suggested as much by word and deed at several key junctures, such as the period of moderation beginning in July 1968 when Hsieh was one of the first to take advantage of Mao's call for an end to factional violence. During the period from September 1967 to mid-February 1968, moreover, Hsieh delivered half a dozen major speeches that pushed a whole range of moderate policies, including the need to form revolutionary committees, to support the Army, to promote birth control, and to end the disruptive activities of Red Guard militants.

There is less uncertainty about the political affinities of Li Hsien-nien. He has worked closely with Chou En-lai at the top of the State Council

hierarchy since the mid-1950s. Although Li occupied a precarious post in a ministry notable for its political casualties, his talents, and more importantly, the protection of Chou En-lai, enabled him to survive the Cultural Revolution. Li has long experience as a skilled organizer and administrator and since at least the disastrous Great Leap Forward period, it has been clear that he has taken a relatively moderate position as an economic planner.

With the Cultural Revolution downgrading of Li Fu-ch'un, former politburo member and chairman of the State Planning Commission, Li now becomes the most important economic spokesman in China. Since the ninth party congress, evidence also has been accumulating that Peking has settled on Li as de facto foreign minister and probable successor to the downgraded Ch'en I. Although Li himself is no stranger to foreign policy matters, his assumption of some of the foreign minister's duties is primarily significant because it appears to ensure that his protector Chou En-lai will continue to exercise direct influence over the conduct of Peking's international relations.

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## AFTER MAO, THE DELUGE?

Although China's present elite tends to be divided into mutually antagonistic groupings, the complicated ground rules of politics as played in Peking preclude a definitive assessment of the leadership situation. At present, the relative positions and influence of the radicals, i.e., those most active in the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, and the moderates, i.e., primarily the military-administrator groups, still seem to be in flux. The picture is further clouded because the various leaders can by no means be identified with a set pattern of factions possessing carefully formulated political programs. As in the past, it can be assumed that some individuals who appear aligned at one time with one group, will switch allegiance whenever they perceive this would serve their self-interest, and accordingly they will make personal and policy accommodations with leaders of different political persuasions. Moreover, interrelationships within the elite are complicated by the consciousness that Mao might at any time attempt to strike them down should they oppose him too directly, and, conversely, by the knowledge that overidentification with Mao's more radical policies may prove a liability when he is no longer a living shield.

Under these conditions, it will continue to be extremely hard for the politburo to formulate coherent policies on which all elements can agree. Although certain pressing domestic issues, such as the need to maintain law and order, and such foreign issues as the need to respond to Soviet pressures, have elicited some positive responses from the leadership, the present uneasy balance in the politburo is likely to preclude bold moves in any direction. Mao will certainly fight to avoid being put on the shelf as he felt he was following the Great Leap Forward fiasco of 1958-1960. By the same token, the excesses of the Cultural Revolution probably have encouraged some of

China's leaders toward the view that, both for China's sake and for their own self-preservation, Mao ought to be restrained in the future.

Assuming that the same factors of power, policy, and personal rivalries will continue to operate while Mao remains at the helm, the result of his passing is likely to be even less cohesive at the top, and the succession could well be disorderly and contentious. The purge of his first heir apparent, Liu Shao-ch'i, aborted the Chinese Communists' initial attempt to provide for the orderly transfer of political power, and Mao's efforts to groom Lin Piao as successor seem a less-than-satisfactory solution to the problem. Partly because of his poor health and partly because of his close identification with the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, Lin does not appear credible as anything more than a short-term replacement.

Because Lin has received a clear mandate, he probably will initially get the post of party chairman. It is also true that Mao and Lin have been industriously attempting to build a structure—both party and military—designed to be responsive to Lin. Lin, however, does not possess anything like Mao's charisma, and though most key power positions in China's governing structure today are held by military men, their fortunes during the Cultural Revolution suggest that many of them may not be entirely politically responsive to Lin.

The policies that Lin attempts to pursue will also have a crucial bearing on his prospects for consolidating his position. To a large extent, Lin must be considered an enigma, who, because he has operated for almost 40 years in Mao's shadow, cannot really be known until the shadow is removed. In view of Lin's record in the Cultural Revolution, it seems likely that his basic predilection would be to carry on along the policy lines

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laid down by Mao. Should he attempt to do so, however, he will probably have to defer much more to the wishes of others than Mao has done. Moreover, it is not clear whether Lin Piao, once Mao is gone, will be able to formulate programs needed to manage the vast Chinese nation.

If Lin hopes to consolidate and hold his position, he would have to secure the collaboration or at least the acquiescence of the conservative-oriented military powerholders as well as the government bureaucrats led by Chou En-lai, without whom he could not successfully rule the country. This should entail some modification of Maoist policies. An alternative to this would be for Lin to remove swiftly potential opposition and to launch his own version of the Cultural Revolution, a venture unlikely to succeed. Should Lin in fact persist in playing the role of an unreconstructed Maoist in all fields, it seems likely that he would be shunted aside by some combination of military, party, and government leaders.

In any event, with Mao's death or incapacity, the chances of an open split in the leadership will rise sharply. A stormy and possibly protracted period may ensue in which basic policy

issues will fuel a sharp leadership struggle. The process of the Cultural Revolution has already resulted in some diffusion of power at the center, and in the future, provincial leaders are likely to play a more important role in the over-all political picture. Political links with strong regional figures could become increasingly important to competing personalities at the center, and ambitious regional leaders may increasingly find opportunities to use their local power as an important springboard to eminence at the top.

As long as Mao remains on the scene, it is possible that he will attempt to give renewed forward momentum to his drive to revive revolutionary enthusiasm. But it apparently is already clear to powerful elements in the leadership that much of his revolutionary dogma has proved irrelevant to China's problems in the modern world. Although China's future course cannot be predicted with confidence, it is possible that, in the wake of Mao's passing, Communist China's leaders—whoever they are—will be forced increasingly to respond to changing conditions and to pressures from men whose drive is toward greater rationalization of the economy and political apparatus—or at least toward the orderly pursuit of a more pragmatic version of Mao's romantic vision.

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BY: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ Number or code \_\_\_\_\_ Extension 1021

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MAO TSE-TUNG AND HIS ENTOURAGE



Ch'en Po-ta



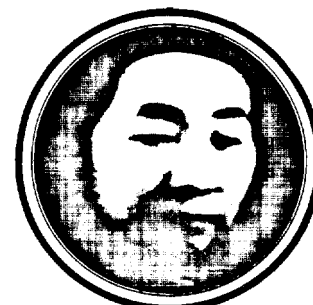
Lin Piao



K'ang Sheng



Chiang Ch'ing



Yeh Ch'un



Yao Wen-yuan



Wang Tung-hsing



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## Lin and the Military



Li Tso-p'eng



Lin Piao



Wu Fa-hsien



Huang Yung-sheng



Ch'iu Hui-tso



Yeh Chien-ying



Hsu Shih-yu



Li Te-sheng



Ch'en Hsi-lien

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